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TAGS: PGOV PREL MOPS PHUM ECON IZ

SUBJECT: NINEWA: TURKISH-IRAQI BORDER CRISIS HAS LITTLE IMPACT SO FAR IN THIS NORTHERN PROVINCE

SECSTATE FOR USAID

Classified By: Nineva PRT Leader Jason Hyland: 1.4 (B) and (D).

This is a Nineva Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) message.

Business as Usual So Far in Nineva

¶11. (C) Our political interlocutors in Nineva told PRT that the current crisis along the Turkish-Iraqi border has had little impact so far on this northern province. Leaders of the Iraqi Islamic Party (IIP), the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) told the PRT leader that the everyday effect has been very low -- economically, politically and in terms of internally displaced persons.

Arabs Not Unpleased by Pressure on Kurds

¶12. (C) Dr. Mohammed Shakir, provincial leader of the IIP, also told PRT leader October 23 that he saw little effect to date on the province from the crisis. However, he added that many Arabs were quietly pleased to see problems arising between the Kurds and Turkey because that meant the Kurds would have to move more of their people into the north to deal with it, and away from Arab areas. He also said that such movement would diffuse some tensions over Article 140. At the same time, and reflecting the complex role played by Kurdish security here, he worried that the movement of some Peshmerga to the north could cause the security situation in Mosul to worsen.

Provincial Government Not Concerned

¶13. (C) Governor Duraid Kashmoula told PRT leader October 23 that Turkish actions have had no effect in Nineva, which is close to the Turkish border, but separated by the Kurdish Regional Government's Dahuk Province. In the same conversation, he mentioned that the Turkish Consul General had recently visited him and discussed ways that Turkey could cooperate with the province on many fronts. On October 25, the acting head of the Provincial Council Mohammed Bashir told Poloff that he agreed with the Governor's assessment of the situation. In an October 24 meeting, Vice Governor and head of the KDP Khasro Goran told the PRT leader that the flow of supplies and trucks across the Turkey-Iraq border at Habur Gate had not slowed down at all. He said, however, that a real impact would be felt if Turkey started a major cross border campaign. For their part, the provincial authorities -- who represent the Kurdish parties, seem to be going out of their way to demonstrate goodwill toward the

Turkish Consulate General in Mosul.

Comment

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¶4. (C) Nineva opinion leaders are taking the border crisis in stride, and reporting conditions as normal. We will continue to follow up on the issue with our provincial interlocutors, particularly as many key commercial and construction items sold in Nineva enter Iraq through Habur Gate. Circumstances could change significantly if the Turks launch a major attack on the PKK across the border.

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